GEMSTONE PUBLISHING

FREE COMIC BOOK DAY 2010

The OVERSTREET

GUIDE TO COLLECTING COMICS

The OVERSTREET® GUIDE TO COLLECTING COMICS

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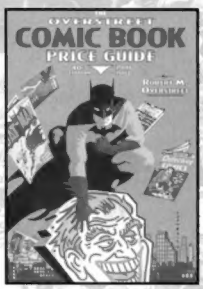

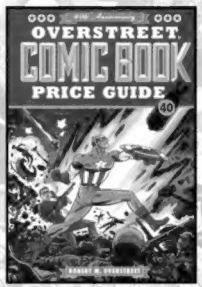

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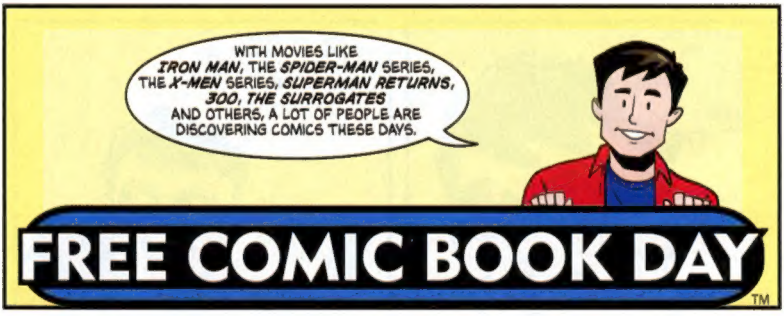
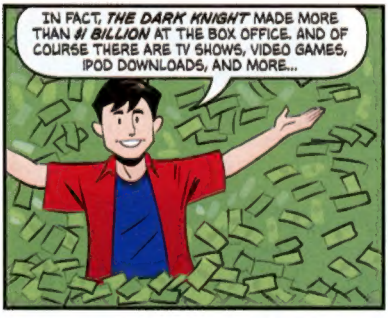

WITH MOVIES LIKE *IRON MAN*, THE *SPIDER-MAN* SERIES, THE *X-MEN* SERIES, *SUPERMAN RETURNS*, *300*, *THE SURROGATES* AND OTHERS, A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE DISCOVERING COMICS THESE DAYS.
FREE COMIC BOOK DAY
TM


IN FACT, *THE DARK KNIGHT* MADE MORE THAN $1 BILLION AT THE BOX OFFICE. AND OF COURSE THERE ARE TV SHOWS, VIDEO GAMES, IPOD DOWNLOADS, AND MORE...

SO, EVEN IF BY SOME CHANCE THIS IS THE FIRST COMIC BOOK YOU'VE EVER OPENED, YOU'VE HEARD OF TONS OF COMIC CHARACTERS BEFORE.
FREE COMIC BOOK DAY
OVERSTREET

BATMAN, ROBIN, WOLVERINE, CAPTAIN AMERICA PAINKILLER JANE, SUPERMAN, SPIDER-MAN, THE FANTASTIC FOUR, GHOST RIDER, BLADE, THOR, THE TEEN TITANS...
FROM SMALL FILMS TO BLOCKBUSTERS, AND FROM LIVE ACTION TV TO CARTOONS...
AMAZING FANTASY
SPIDER MAN
PEOPLE KNOW COMIC CHARACTERS. IT ONLY MAKES SENSE THAT SOME OF THOSE FANS WOULD WANT TO KNOW WHERE THEY CAME FROM!
THE MOST SUPERNATURAL

SO, WHETHER *FREE COMIC BOOK DAY* OR SOME OTHER EVENT BROUGHT YOU TO YOUR FIRST COMIC BOOK SHOP OR YOUR FIRST CONVENTION...
OR IF YOU'VE BEEN AROUND A LONG, LONG TIME...
WE'RE GLAD YOU'VE JOINED US.
THE MOST SUPERNATURAL SUPERHERO OF ALL!
ACTION COMICS
WOLVERINE
THOR

ONE OF THE COOL THINGS ABOUT COMIC BOOKS IS THAT THERE ARE LOTS OF NEW ONES TO DISCOVER...
AND THERE ARE LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DIFFERENT BACK ISSUES, TOO!
BACK ISSUE COMICS RANGE FROM LESS THAN COVER PRICE TO $1,000,000.
A COMIC BOOK FOR, $1 MILLION? HARD TO BELIEVE, HUH?
THE FIRST ONE WAS A COPY OF ACTION COMICS #1, THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF SUPERMAN.
THE SECOND, JUST A FEW DAYS LATER, WAS DETECTIVE COMICS #27, THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF BATMAN.
MANY OTHERS HAVE SOLD FOR RECORD PRICES IN THE LAST YEAR OR SO, EVEN WITH THE TOUGH ECONOMY NATIONALLY.
THE GRADE AND SCARCITY OF THE ISSUES HAVE A LOT TO DO WITH THAT. WE'LL GET INTO THAT IN JUST A BIT...

THE BEST PART IS THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT WAYS TO COLLECT.
YOU CAN CHOOSE TO FOLLOW INDIVIDUAL PUBLISHERS, WRITERS, ARTISTS, CHARACTERS...
YOU CAN COLLECT SUPERHEROES, WAR COMICS, WESTERNS, ROMANCE OR WHATEVER YOU LIKE...
YOU CAN CHOOSE #1 ISSUES, FIRST APPEARANCES, CROSSOVERS, OR MANY OTHER VARIATIONS.
THE BEST THING TO COLLECT IS WHAT YOU LIKE, NOT WHAT SOMEONE ELSE LIKES.
WHETHER IT'S SPIDER-MAN OR EVERY COMIC THAT CAME OUT THE MONTH YOU WERE BORN, IT'S BEST TO DO IT WITH A PLAN.

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DOCTOR EVILLE ©2010 CAPTAIN ACTION ENTERPRISES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

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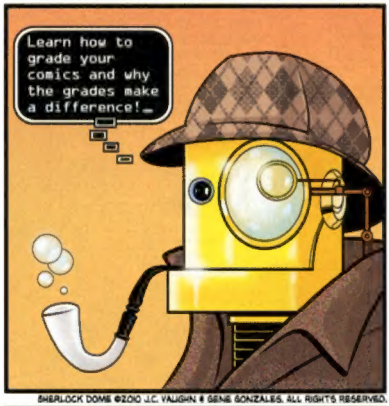

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BILLY BOB DRIVAWL ©2010 J.C. VAUGHN & VINCENT SPENCER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

FREE COMIC BOOK WEEKEND CONTINUES!
COME TO THE FIRST EVER WASHINGTON, DC COMICON SUNDAY MAY 2!
ON THE HISTORIC GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY (FAIRFAX) CAMPUS!
SPONSORED BY: VA COMICON .com | BALTIMORE COMIC-CON | more info at: DCcomicon.com
WITH SUPERSTAR GUESTS BEN TEMPLESMITH AND FRANK CHO!

Washington Comicon.com

VA COMICON .com

SATURDAY, 11/20
& SUNDAY, 11/21
(SAT. HOURS: 10-7P) (SUN: 10-5P)
AT THE LUXURIOUS SHERATON
6624 W BROAD ST.
IN HISTORIC RICHMOND, VA
PLENTY OF FREE PARKING!

Guests of Honor: ETHAN VAN SCIVER!
MICHAEL GOLDEN!
HERB TRIMPE!

tsunami studios

SPECIAL GUESTS:
ROBERT ATKINS
RICK KETCHAM
JAMES KUHORIC
JAMES CALLAHAN
BILLY TUCCI
ALEX SAVIUK
KELLY YATES
DAN PARENT
RANDY GREEN
J.C. VAUGHN
RICK SPEARS
BRIAN SHEARER
R. WITTERSTAETTER
LOUIS SMALL JR.
JOHN WYCOUGH
BUDD ROOT
ANDY SMITH
STEVE BIRD
STEVE CONLEY
CHRIS PITZER
...and many, MANY MORE!

The VA Comicon is held quarterly in historic Richmond, VA less than 5 minutes from I-95 and I-64! VAcomicon.com!
Come to our 1-day shows on 5/23/2010, 8/8/2010 and our MASSIVE two-day show on 11/20-21/2010!
Sponsored by Brett's Comic Pile! We are ALWAYS BUYING COMICS! Call us for a FREE, no-obligation consultation and cash offer!
No comic book collection is too large or too small. CASH is always on hand! Call Jason TODAY toll-free at 1-877-77-COMIC! Keen!

SECRET ORIGINS:

PART 1: THE GUIDE

Every long lasting comic book character has an origin story, and so does *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide*. When the *Guide's* founder, author and publisher Robert M. Overstreet was 13 years old, a friend introduced him to the EC comics line, with titles like *Tales From The Crypt* and *Weird Science*, and he was hooked for life.

"I met Landon Chesney when I was in the eighth grade. LC was very intelligent and he collected ECs. He collected them seriously. He loved the art, and he was a great artist himself," Overstreet said. "We were the two comic book collectors in the town. We had friends that had comic books, but we were the only ones who were serious about it. We were always seeking EC comics to complete our sets, and so we discovered a few EC comics from our friends, but not many."

Bob Overstreet, circa 1966, looks over some of his collection.

Even back in those early days, Overstreet was already thinking about how collecting could be more organized than it was. Early science fiction fandom had gotten organized through the publication of fanzines, and coin collectors had already been working together for more than a generation by that point.

"Back in the early '50s I also collected coins. I always bought the Red Book [the annual coin price guide] when it came out each year," he said. There was a coin dealer in his hometown and they would have a party each year when the new Red Book arrived.

"This background was pretty important, I think. At the same time, I was really into EC Comics and trying to locate the back issues, other collectors, dealers, or anyone that had a source for those comics," he said. That was easier said than done, though, because there were no forums that allowed easy communication. Not only was there no internet, but comic book fanzines, magazines and even comic shops were all ideas of the future at that point.

Overstreet and Chesney started traveling to meet anyone who had EC comics to sell. Through that process, they saw that fans had a variety of tastes. Some, like them, prized the EC titles. Others, though, loved westerns, horror, science fiction, superheroes, funny animals or one of the other genres. They met those who took careful care of their comics and those who "fixed" the spines of their well-read issues with copious quantities of tape.

"I think it was several years of slowly discovering other collectors in the area and then around the country. We discovered science fiction fandom in the early '50s," he said. The example of what science fiction fans had and comic book fans didn't have was striking to him.

"They were organized, and they were putting out newsletters," he said. They joined science fiction groups to get the names of fellow collectors. Through these contacts, Overstreet traded a duplicate EC issue to a collector for a copy of *Superman* #2. He might have had the thought previously, but he knows he had it then:

"Who knows? This may be worth something someday," he said.

All through the 1960s, Overstreet hoped that someone would put out a price guide on comic books because one was definitely needed. Prices were escalating rapidly. Fanzines such as *Rocket's Blast - Comic Collector* (RBCC) were reaching an audience of thousands, connecting fans and a growing number of dealers.

With encouragement and promises of help from others, Overstreet began to put together what he thought the *Guide* should look like. When it came time for that help to materialize, though, it didn't.

Overstreet persevered, though, and the first edition of *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* appeared in 1970. It quickly became the talk of the comics community and in just a few years was accepted as the Bible for comic book collectors, a position it has held every year since.

Prices: 1970 vs. Today

When the first edition of *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* was released in 1970, some collectors and dealers actually complained the prices listed in the book were too high!

Action Comics #1
First appearance of Superman
1970 Mint Price: $300
2009 NM– Price: $750,000

Detective Comics #27
First appearance of Batman
1970 Mint Price: $275
2009 NM– Price: $575,000

Marvel Comics #1
First Sub-Mariner and Human Torch
1970 Mint Price: $250
2009 NM– Price: $460,000

Whiz Comics #1 (#2)
First appearance of Captain Marvel
1970 Mint Price: $235
2009 NM– Price: $95,000

Walt Disney's Comics & Stories #1
Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse reprints
1970 Mint Price: $115
2009 NM– Price: $36,000

All Star Comics #3
First Justice Society of America
1970 Mint Price: $135
2009 NM– Price: $80,000

Captain America Comics #1
First appearance of Captain America
1970 Mint Price: $150
2009 NM– Price: $190,000

Pep Comics #22
First appearance of Archie
1970 Mint Price: $10
2009 NM– Price: $38,000

Showcase #4
First appearance of Silver Age Flash
1970 Mint Price: $12
2009 NM– Price: $48,000

Prices: 1970 vs. Today

Showcase #22
First Silver Age Green Lantern
1970 Mint Price: $6
2009 NM– Price: $10,000

Brave and the Bold #28
First Justice League of America
1970 Mint Price: $5
2009 NM– Price: $13,000

Fantastic Four #1
First appearance of the Fantastic Four
1970 Mint Price: $12
2009 NM– Price: $52,000

Incredible Hulk #1
First appearance of the Hulk
1970 Mint Price: $14
2009 NM– Price: $40,000

Amazing Fantasy #15
First appearance of Spider-Man
1970 Mint Price: $16
2009 NM– Price: $65,000

Journey Into Mystery #83
First appearance of Thor
1970 Mint Price: $10
2009 NM– Price: $18,000

Tales of Suspense #39
First appearance of Iron Man
1970 Mint Price: $6
2009 NM– Price: $15,000

The Avengers #1
First appearance of the Avengers
1970 Mint Price: $6
2009 NM– Price: $9,200

X-Men #1
First appearance of the X-Men
1970 Mint Price: $6
2009 NM– Price: $22,000

For the latest prices on these comics – and about 300,000 other issues – check out *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* #40, which is set to go on sale Wednesday, July 21, 2010.

GRADING

ONE OF THE ***MOST IMPORTANT*** FACTORS IN DETERMINING A COMIC'S VALUE IS THE ***GRADE*** IT RECEIVES.

JUST FOR INSTANCE, A ***9.2*** COPY OF *INCREDIBLE HULK* #1 SOLD FOR $125,000 LAST YEAR. A ***2.0*** COPY OF THAT SAME ISSUE MIGHT NOT EVEN BE $1,000.

SO, HEY, I'M NOT TRYING TO TELL YOU WHAT TO DO, BUT YOU MIGHT WANT TO LEARN A BIT ABOUT GRADING?

PAINKILLER JANE © 2010 QUESADA & PALMIOTTI
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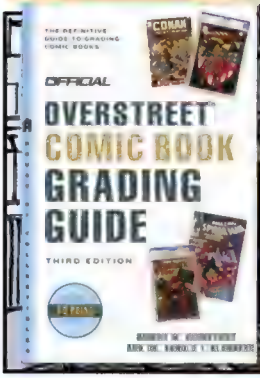

It's a good practice to develop relationships with dealers and other collectors who prove themselves trustworthy.

MANY PEOPLE HAVE STARTED USING INDEPENDENT, THIRD-PARTY GRADING SERVICES, SUCH AS CGC.

HEY, SOMEONE TOOK A BITE OUT OF THIS COMIC!

OKAY, THE BASICS OF GRADING ARE PRETTY STRAIGHTFORWARD. THE TOP OF THE SCALE IS ***10.0*** AND THE BOTTOM IS ***0.5***.

IF YOU'RE ***NEW*** AT THIS, DON'T EXPECT TO BE AS GOOD AS A VETERAN COLLECTOR OR DEALER RIGHT AWAY. YOU'LL GET BETTER AT IT QUICKLY, AND IT'S SOMETHING ***EVERY COLLECTOR*** SHOULD LEARN.

WHEN YOU'RE READY, TURN THE PAGE AND YOU'LL FIND THE DEFINITIONS OF EACH GRADE.

GRADING DEFINITIONS

10.0 GEM MINT (GM): This is an exceptional example of a given book - the best ever seen. The slightest bindery defects and/or printing flaws may be seen only upon very close inspection. The overall look is "as if it has never been handled or released for purchase." Only the slightest bindery or printing defects are allowed, and these would be imperceptible on first viewing. No bindery tears. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Inks are bright with high reflectivity. Well centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Corners are cut square and sharp. No creases. No dates or stamped markings allowed. No soiling, staining or other discoloration. Spine is tight and flat. No spine roll or split allowed. Staples must be original, centered and clean with no rust. No staple tears or stress lines. Paper is white, supple and fresh. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. No interior autographs or owner signatures. Centerfold is firmly secure. No interior tears.

9.9 MINT (MT): Near perfect in every way. Only subtle bindery or printing defects are allowed. No bindery tears. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Inks are bright with high reflectivity. Generally well centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Corners are cut square and sharp. No creases. Small, inconspicuous, lightly penciled, stamped or inked arrival dates are acceptable as long as they are in an unobtrusive location. No soiling, staining or other discoloration. Spine is tight and flat. No spine roll or split allowed. Staples must be original, generally centered and clean with no rust. No staple tears or stress lines. Paper is white, supple and fresh. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. Centerfold is firmly secure. No interior tears.

9.8 NEAR MINT/MINT (NM/MT): Nearly perfect in every way with only minor imperfections that keep it from the next higher grade. Only subtle bindery or printing defects are allowed. No bindery tears. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Inks are bright with high reflectivity. Generally well centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Corners are cut square and sharp. No creases. Small, inconspicuous, lightly penciled, stamped or inked arrival dates are acceptable as long as they are in an unobtrusive location. No soiling, staining or other discoloration. Spine is tight and flat. No spine roll or split allowed. Staples must be original, generally centered and clean with no rust. No staple tears or stress lines. Paper is off-white to white, supple and fresh. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. Centerfold is firmly secure. Only the slightest interior tears are allowed.

9.6 NEAR MINT+ (NM+): Nearly perfect with a minor additional virtue or virtues that raise it from Near Mint. The overall look is "as if it was just purchased and read once or twice." Only subtle bindery or printing defects are allowed. No bindery tears are allowed, although on Golden Age books bindery tears of up to 1/8" have been noted. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Inks are bright with high reflectivity. Well centered and firmly secured to interior pages. One corner may be almost imperceptibly blunted, but still almost sharp and cut square. Almost imperceptible indentations are permissible, but no creases, bends, or color break. Small, inconspicuous, lightly penciled, stamped or inked arrival dates are acceptable as long as they are in an unobtrusive location. No soiling, staining or other discoloration. Spine is tight and flat. No spine roll or split allowed. Staples must be original, generally centered, with only the slightest discoloration. No staple tears, stress lines, or rust migration. Paper is off-white, supple and fresh. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. Centerfold is firmly secure. Only the slightest interior tears are allowed.

9.4 NEAR MINT (NM): Nearly perfect with only minor imperfections that keep it from the next higher grade. The overall look is "as if it was just purchased and read once or twice." Subtle bindery defects are allowed. Bindery tears must be less than 1/16" on Silver Age and later books, although on Golden Age books bindery tears of up to 1/4" have been noted. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Inks are bright with high reflectivity. Generally well centered and secured to interior pages. Corners are cut square and sharp with ever-so-slight blunting permitted. A 1/16" bend is permitted with no color break. No creases. Small, inconspicuous, lightly penciled, stamped or inked arrival dates are acceptable as long as they are in an unobtrusive location. No soiling, staining or other discoloration apart from slight foxing. Spine is tight and flat. No spine roll or split allowed. Staples are generally centered; may have slight discoloration. No staple tears are allowed; almost no stress lines. No rust migration. In rare cases, a comic was not stapled at the bindery and therefore has a missing staple; this is not considered a defect. Any staple can be replaced on books up to Fine, but only vintage staples can be used on books from Very Fine to Near Mint. Mint books must have original staples. Paper is cream to off-white, supple and fresh. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. Centerfold is secure. Slight interior tears are allowed.

9.2 NEAR MINT– (NM–): Nearly perfect with only a minor additional defect or defects that keep it from Near Mint. A limited number of minor bindery defects are allowed. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Inks are bright with only the slightest dimming of reflectivity. Generally well centered and secured to interior pages. Corners are cut square

and sharp with ever-so-slight blunting permitted. A 1/16"-1/8" bend is permitted with no color break. No creases. Small, inconspicuous, lightly penciled, stamped or inked arrival dates are acceptable as long as they are in an unobtrusive location. No soiling, staining or other discoloration apart from slight foxing. Spine is tight and flat. No spine roll or split allowed. Staples may show some discoloration. No staple tears are allowed; almost no stress lines. No rust migration. In rare cases, a comic was not stapled at the bindery and therefore has a missing staple; this is not considered a defect. Any staple can be replaced on books up to Fine, but only vintage staples can be used on books from Very Fine to Near Mint. Mint books must have original staples. Paper is cream to off-white, supple and fresh. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. Centerfold is secure. Slight interior tears are allowed.

9.0 **VERY FINE/NEAR MINT (VF/NM):** Nearly perfect with outstanding eye appeal. A limited number of bindery defects are allowed. Almost flat cover with almost imperceptible wear. Inks are bright with slightly diminished reflectivity. An 1/8" bend is allowed if color is not broken. Corners are cut square and sharp with ever-so-slight blunting permitted but no creases. Several lightly penciled, stamped or inked arrival dates are acceptable. No obvious soiling, staining or other discoloration, except for very minor foxing. Spine is tight and flat. No spine roll or split allowed. Staples may show some discoloration. Only the slightest staple tears are allowed. A very minor accumulation of stress lines may be present if they are nearly imperceptible. No rust migration. In rare cases, a comic was not stapled at the bindery and therefore has a missing staple; this is not considered a defect. Any staple can be replaced on books up to Fine, but only vintage staples can be used on books from Very Fine to Near Mint. Mint books must have original staples. Paper is cream to off-white and supple. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. Centerfold is secure. Very minor interior tears may be present.

8.5 **VERY FINE+ (VF+):** Fits the criteria for Very Fine but with an additional virtue or small accumulation of virtues that improves the book's appearance by a perceptible amount.

8.0 **VERY FINE (VF):** An excellent copy with outstanding eye appeal. Sharp, bright and clean with supple pages. A comic book in this grade has the appearance of having been carefully handled. A limited accumulation of minor bindery defects is allowed. Cover is relatively flat with minimal surface wear beginning to show, possibly including some minute wear at corners. Inks are generally bright with moderate to high reflectivity. A 1/4" crease is acceptable if color is not broken. Stamped or inked arrival dates may be present. No obvious soiling, staining or other discoloration, except for minor foxing. Spine is almost flat with no roll. Possible minor color break allowed. Staples may show some discoloration. Very slight staple tears and a few almost very minor to minor stress lines may be present. No rust migration. In rare cases, a comic was not stapled at the bindery and therefore has a missing staple; this is not considered a defect. Any staple can be replaced on books up to Fine, but only vintage staples can be used on books from Very Fine to Near Mint. Mint books must have original staples. Paper is tan to cream and supple. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. Centerfold is mostly secure. Minor interior tears at the margin may be present.

7.5 **VERY FINE– (VF–):** Fits the criteria for Very Fine but with an additional defect or small accumulation of defects that detracts from the book's appearance by a perceptible amount.

7.0 **FINE/VERY FINE (FN/VF):** An above-average copy that shows minor wear but is still relatively flat and clean with outstanding eye appeal. A small accumulation of minor bindery defects is allowed. Minor cover wear beginning to show with interior yellowing or tanning allowed, possibly including minor creases. Corners may be blunted or abraded. Inks are generally bright with a moderate reduction in reflectivity. Stamped or inked arrival dates may be present. No obvious soiling, staining or other discoloration, except for minor foxing. The slightest spine roll may be present, as well as a possible moderate color break. Staples may show some discoloration. Slight staple tears and a slight accumulation of light stress lines may be present. Slight rust migration. In rare cases, a comic was not stapled at the bindery and therefore has a missing staple; this is not considered a defect. Any staple can be replaced on books up to Fine, but only vintage staples can be used on books from Very Fine to Near Mint. Mint books must have original staples. Paper is tan to cream, but not brown. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. Centerfold is mostly secure. Minor interior tears at the margin may be present.

6.5 **FINE+ (FN+):** Fits the criteria for Fine but with an additional virtue or small accumulation of virtues that improves the book's appearance by a perceptible amount.

GRADING DEFINITIONS

6.0 **FINE (FN):** An above-average copy that shows minor wear but is still relatively flat and clean with no significant creasing or other serious defects. Eye appeal is somewhat reduced because of slight surface wear and the accumulation of small defects, especially on the spine and edges. A FINE condition comic book appears to have been read a few times and has been handled with moderate care. Some accumulation of minor bindery defects is allowed. Minor cover wear apparent, with minor to moderate creases. Inks show a major reduction in reflectivity. Blunted or abraded corners are more common, as is minor staining, soiling, discoloration, and/or foxing. Stamped or inked arrival dates may be present. A minor spine roll is allowed. There can also be a 1/4" spine split or severe color break. Staples show minor discoloration. Minor staple tears and an accumulation of stress lines may be present, as well as minor rust migration. In rare cases, a comic was not stapled at the bindery and therefore has a missing staple; this is not considered a defect. Any staple can be replaced on books up to Fine, but only vintage staples can be used on books from Very Fine to Near Mint. Mint books must have original staples. Paper is brown to tan and fairly supple with no signs of brittleness. No hint of acidity in the odor of the newsprint. Minor interior tears at the margin may be present. Centerfold may be loose but not detached.

5.5 **FINE– (FN–):** Fits the criteria for Fine but with an additional defect or small accumulation of defects that detracts from the book's appearance by a perceptible amount.

5.0 **VERY GOOD/FINE (VG/FN):** An above-average but well-used comic book. A comic in this grade shows some moderate wear; eye appeal is somewhat reduced because of the accumulation of defects. Still a desirable copy that has been handled with some care. An accumulation of bindery defects is allowed. Minor to moderate cover wear apparent, with minor to moderate creases and/or dimples. Inks have major to extreme reduction in reflectivity. Blunted or abraded corners are increasingly common, as is minor to moderate staining, discoloration, and/or foxing. Stamped or inked arrival dates may be present. A minor to moderate spine roll is allowed. A spine split of up to 1/2" may be present. Staples show minor discoloration. A slight accumulation of minor staple tears and an accumulation of minor stress lines may also be present, as well as minor rust migration. In rare cases, a comic was not stapled at the bindery and therefore has a missing staple; this is not considered a defect. Any staple can be replaced on books up to Fine, but only vintage staples can be used on books from Very Fine to Near Mint. Mint books must have original staples. Paper is brown to tan with no signs of brittleness. May have the faintest trace of an acidic odor. Centerfold may be loose but not detached. Minor tears may also be present.

4.5 **VERY GOOD+ (VG+):** Fits the criteria for Very Good but with an additional virtue or small accumulation of virtues that improves the book's appearance by a perceptible amount.

4.0 **VERY GOOD (VG):** The average used comic book. A comic in this grade shows some significant moderate wear, but still has not accumulated enough total defects to reduce eye appeal to the point that it is not a desirable copy. Cover shows moderate to significant wear, and may be loose but not completely detached. Moderate to extreme reduction in reflectivity. Can have an accumulation of creases or dimples. Corners may be blunted or abraded. Store stamps, name stamps, arrival dates, initials, etc. have no effect on this grade. Some discoloration, fading, foxing, and even minor soiling is allowed. As much as a 1/4" triangle can be missing out of the corner or edge; a missing 1/8" square is also acceptable. Only minor unobtrusive tape and other amateur repair allowed on otherwise high grade copies. Moderate spine roll may be present and/or a 1" spine split. Staples discolored. Minor to moderate staple tears and stress lines may be present, as well as some rust migration. Paper is brown but not brittle. A minor acidic odor can be detectable. Minor to moderate tears may be present. Centerfold may be loose or detached at one staple.

3.5 **VERY GOOD– (VG–):** Fits the criteria for Very Good but with an additional defect or small accumulation of defects that detracts from the book's appearance by a perceptible amount.

3.0 **GOOD/VERY GOOD (GD/VG):** A used comic book showing some substantial wear. Cover shows significant wear, and may be loose or even detached at one staple. Cover reflectivity is very low. Can have a book-length crease and/or dimples. Corners may be blunted or even rounded. Discoloration, fading, foxing, and even minor to moderate soiling is allowed. A triangle from 1/4" to 1/2" can be missing out of the corner or edge; a missing 1/8" to 1/4" square is also acceptable. Tape and other amateur repair may be present. Moderate spine roll likely. May have a spine split of anywhere from 1" to 1-1/2". Staples may be rusted or replaced. Minor to moderate staple tears and mod-

erate stress lines may be present, as well as some rust migration. Paper is brown but not brittle. Centerfold may be loose or detached at one staple. Minor to moderate interior tears may be present.

2.5 **GOOD+ (GD+):** Fits the criteria for Good but with an additional virtue or small accumulation of virtues that improves the book's appearance by a perceptible amount.

2.0 **GOOD (GD):** Shows substantial wear; often considered a "reading copy." Cover shows significant wear and may even be detached. Cover reflectivity is low and in some cases completely absent. Book-length creases and dimples may be present. Rounded corners are more common. Moderate soiling, staining, discoloration and foxing may be present. The largest piece allowed missing from the front or back cover is usually a 1/2" triangle or a 1/4" square, although some Silver Age books such as 1960s Marvels have had the price corner box clipped from the top left front cover and may be considered Good if they would otherwise have graded higher. Tape and other forms of amateur repair are common in Silver Age and older books. Spine roll is likely. May have up to a 2" spine split. Staples may be degraded, replaced or missing. Moderate staple tears and stress lines may be present, as well as rust migration. Paper is brown but not brittle. Centerfold may be loose or detached. Moderate interior tears may be present.

1.8 **GOOD– (GD–):** Fits the criteria for Good but with an additional defect or small accumulation of defects that detracts from the book's appearance by a perceptible amount.

1.5 **FAIR/GOOD (FR/GD):** A comic showing substantial to heavy wear. A copy in this grade still has all pages and covers, although there may be pieces missing. Books in this grade are commonly creased, scuffed, abraded, soiled, and possibly unattractive, but still generally readable. Cover shows considerable wear and may be detached. Nearly no reflectivity to no reflectivity remaining. Store stamp, name stamp, arrival date and initials are permitted. Book-length creases, tears and folds may be present. Rounded corners are increasingly common. Soiling, staining, discoloration and foxing is generally present. Up to 1/10 of the back cover may be missing. Tape and other forms of amateur repair are increasingly common in Silver Age and older books. Spine roll is common. May have a spine split between 2" and 2/3 the length of the book. Staples may be degraded, replaced or missing. Staple tears and stress lines are common, as well as rust migration. Paper is brown and may show brittleness around the edges. Acidic odor may be present. Centerfold may be loose or detached. Interior tears are common.

1.0 **FAIR (FR):** A copy in this grade shows heavy wear. Some collectors consider this the lowest collectible grade because comic books in lesser condition are usually incomplete and/or brittle. Comics in this grade are usually soiled, faded, ragged and possibly unattractive. This is the last grade in which a comic remains generally readable. Cover may be detached, and inks have lost all reflectivity. Creases, tears and/or folds are prevalent. Corners are commonly rounded or absent. Soiling and staining is present. Books in this condition generally have all pages and most of the covers, although there may be up to 1/4 of the front cover missing or no back cover, but not both. Tape and other forms of amateur repair are more common. Spine roll is more common; spine split can extend up to 2/3 the length of the book. Staples may be missing or show rust and discoloration. An accumulation of staple tears and stress lines may be present, as well as rust migration. Paper is brown and may show brittleness around the edges but not in the central portion of the pages. Acidic odor may be present. Accumulation of interior tears. Chunks may be missing. The centerfold may be missing if readability is generally preserved (although there may be difficulty). Coupons may be cut.

0.5 **POOR (PR):** Most comic books in this grade have been sufficiently degraded to the point where there is little or no collector value; they are easily identified by a complete absence of eye appeal. Comics in this grade are brittle almost to the point of turning to dust with a touch, and are usually incomplete. Extreme cover fading may render the cover almost indiscernible. May have extremely severe stains, mildew or heavy cover abrasion to the point that some cover inks are indistinct/absent. Covers may be detached with large chunks missing. Can have extremely ragged edges and extensive creasing. Corners are rounded or virtually absent. Covers may have been defaced with paints, varnishes, glues, oil, indelible markers or dyes, and may have suffered heavy water damage. Can also have extensive amateur repairs such as laminated covers. Extreme spine roll present; can have extremely ragged spines or a complete, book-length split. Staples can be missing or show extreme rust and discoloration. Extensive staple tears and stress lines may be present, as well as extreme rust migration. Paper exhibits moderate to severe brittleness (where the comic book literally falls apart when examined). Extreme acidic odor may be present. Extensive interior tears. Multiple pages, including the centerfold, may be missing that affect readability. Coupons may be cut.

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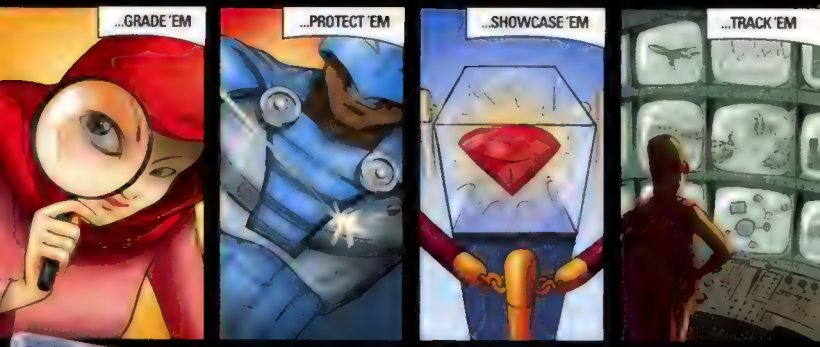

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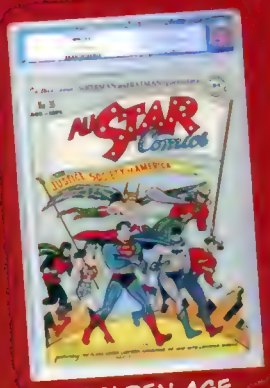

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SECRET ORIGINS:

PART 2: THE COVERS

The first edition of *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* didn't feature any comic art on the cover. It was simply white cover stock with black ink depicting the logos of various comic book publishers. The second printing was the same except the cover stock was blue.

For the second and third editions, an array of classic comics were featured – four each – before giving way to an original cover featuring the Justice Society of America by Don Newton on *Guide* #4.

Once Bob Overstreet started commissioning new cover art rather than just classic comic book covers, he immediately began setting a standard that we still fight to keep up with.

Take a look at the early line-up: Joe Kubert provided a classic Tarzan image for the cover of #5, Will Eisner brought back The Spirit for the Bicentennial-themed "Spirit of '76" on *Guide* #6, and legendary Carl Barks, better known for his work on Disney's ducks, illustrated Porky Pig on the cover of #7.

Along the way, Bill Ward drew Torchy, Wally Wood drew a typical Wally Wood space scene, Alex Schomburg revisited Timely's Golden Age greats, Norman Mingo weighed in with Alfred E. Neuman, C.C. Beck burst down doors with Captain Marvel, and Jerry Robinson flashed back to Batman and Robin.

Over the years, characters from Marvel, DC, Fawcett, Archie, Disney, MAD, EC, and others have been featured.

Silver Age legend (and a true gentleman if there ever was one) Murphy Anderson has worked on nine *Guide* covers over the years, ranging from originals featuring DC heroes to faithful recreations of key Golden Age issues.

Marvel's Silver Age key issues have been a running theme tackled by artist John K. Snyder III on seven covers.

Modern titan Alex Ross has turned in five pieces, while George Pérez and Mark Sparacio have two each to their credits (at least thus far).

Captain America co-creator Joe Simon, Flash artist and former DC publisher Carmine Infantino, Starman artist Tony Harris, Wildstorm Productions founder (and newly named DC co-publisher) Jim Lee and Shi creator Billy Tucci, are among the others who have set and kept the high standards for the book.

For the 40th anniversary edition, they are joined by Mark Chiarello (Batman), Darwyn Cooke (Captain America), and John Romita, Jr. (Hero Initiative exclusive *Conan the Barbarian* #1 recreation).

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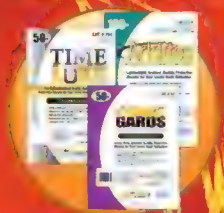

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PRESERVATION AND STORAGE

There are a number of powerful foes waiting to strike at collectors, not least of which are the comic books themselves, or rather the effects of time on them.

Comics, after all, were not manufactured for the long haul. They were built to last just a short time, made with acidic newsprint paper, thin covers, and inconsistent inks. They weren't originally made with bags and board, long boxes, Mylar snugs or CGC slabs. They were created, as painful as this is for a true collector to think about, to be disposable.

Is there any way to combat the ravages of time on your comics? Yes! We might not be able to keep comics in Gem Mint condition forever, but we can slow the damage with good methods of preservation and storage.

Some of the best advice for preserving a comic is simply to handle it carefully. Most dealers would prefer to remove the comic from its bag and show it to the customer themselves. In this way, if the book is damaged, it would be the dealer's responsibility and not the customer's.

When handling high-grade comics, always wash and dry your hands first, eliminating harmful oils from the skin. Lay the comic on a flat surface or in the palm of your hand and slowly turn the pages. This will minimize the stress to the staples and spine.

Careful storage is also a key element in the preservation of a cherished comic book. They must be protected from the elements, including the dangers of light, heat, and humidity. In addition to thinking about where you store your comics, you should also consider what you store them in. For years there have been arguments about what materials are acceptable.

For many years, it has been the policy of *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* that in the *short term*, under good conditions, most plastic bags and boards are acceptable. It is vital to remember that it is up to you as a collector to find out what materials are used to make your collector supplies and to understand that when combined with negative conditions, particularly heat and humidity, the safe lifespan of bags that might otherwise be fine in the short term is quickly decreased.

For long term preservation, only archivally sound materials should be used. Generally speaking, this means Mylar snugs and acid-free backing boards, but there are numerous variations on these subjects. The time you spend learning about these materials, though, will be time you don't have to spend later wondering what happened to your collection.

Even when it comes to boxes, care must be taken. Some contain chemicals that will actually help to destroy your collection rather than save it. Always be aware whether you are purchasing materials designed for long-term storage or not.

You can read more about these subjects in *The Official Overstreet Grading Guide*, available at local comic shops.

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675FB	6 ¾ x 10 ½	Current Comics - fits 700	$9.50	$31.00	$135.00
700FB	7 x 10 ½	Standard Comics - fits 725	$10.00	$32.00	$140.00
750FB	7 ½ x 10 ½	Silver/Golden Comics - fits 775	$10.50	$35.00	$150.00
		Shipping & Handling	$5.00	$16.00	$60.00

Half-Back Pricing:

Item Code	Size	Description	Price Per 100	Price Per 500	Price Per 2000
675HB	6 ¾ x 10 ½	Current Comics - fits 700	$8.00	$35.00	$120.00
700HB	7 x 10 ½	Standard Comics - fits 725	$8.50	$36.00	$125.00
750HB	7 ½ x 10 ½	Silver/Golden Comics - fits 775	$9.00	$39.00	$135.00
		Shipping & Handling	$5.00	$16.00	$60.00

Mylites 2 Pricing:

Item Code	Size	Description	Price Per 50	Price Per 200	Price Per 1000
700M2	7 x 10 ½	Current Comics: 1990's & up	$10.75	$36.00	$155.00
725M2	7 ¼ x 10 ½	Standard Comics: 1970's-1990's	$11.00	$37.00	$160.00
775M2	7 ¾ x 10 ½	Silver/Gold Comics: 1950's-1970's	$11.50	$38.00	$165.00
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COMIC BOOK AGES

When we use terms like "Golden Age" or "Silver Age" or any other age to describe a period of comic book history, we're using a form of verbal shorthand to quickly convey our meaning, but what is it we're really saying?

More than 90 years before *New Fun Comics* #1 hit the stands, *The Adventures of Obadiah Oldbuck* presented a story in sequential comic form. Someone made the decision to publish it and influenced the next generation of cartoonists.

If Vin Sullivan and his contemporaries hadn't been looking to try something different, would *Action Comics* #1 ever have happened? If Julie Schwartz hadn't been interested in reviving the superheroes, would *Showcase* #4 have witnessed the reinterpretation of the Flash? If Stan Lee hadn't stepped away from the day-to-day operations at Marvel, would Gwen Stacy have died? If the limited series format hadn't proved successful, how would *Crisis on Infinite Earths* have been handled?

It's simple: the comics and other significant milestones most often came about because of editorial or publishing decisions that were made several months before. It is actually these decisions we are marking when we note the defining characteristics of a comic book age.

AGE	YEARS
Pioneer	1500s-1828
Victorian	1828-1883
Platinum	1883-1938
Golden	1938-1945
Atom	1946-1956
Silver	1956-1970
Bronze	1970-1984
Copper	1984-1992
Modern	1992-Present

PEDIGREES

What are comic book pedigrees? Why are they important?

According to the forthcoming book *The Guide To Comic Book Pedigrees*, "A pedigreed collection must have been accumulated by one individual during the time the comics were released on the newsstand. This is a critical factor because a pedigree's appeal comes from their homogenous quality and singular genesis. The books have aged together in the same environment, creating a uniform 'feel' that does not exist for comics in a collection with diverse origins."

As the book's website points out, there are three other commonly accepted stipulations for what makes a collection a pedigree collection:

- A pedigreed collection must primarily consist of high quality comic books.
- A pedigreed collection must contain a substantial number of key or rare issues, or represent a significant portion of a particular genre, company, period, or classic title/character.
- Comics Guaranty, LLC (CGC) and the collecting community must continue to recognize the pedigree name of a collection past the point of initial sale.

The first widely recognized comic book pedigree was (and is) the Edgar Church collection, which is also known as the Mile High collection, which was unveiled in the 1970s. Since it first gained notoriety, others have surfaced including the following:

Allentown
Aurora
Bethlehem
Big Apple
Boston
Bowling Green
Carson City
Chicago
Circle 8
Cosmic Aeroplane
Crowley
Curator
Davis Crippen ("D")
Denver
Don & Maggie Thompson
Edgar Church (Mile High)
Gaines File
Green River
Hawkeye
Kansas City
Lamont Larson
Lost Valley
Massachusetts
Mohawk Valley
Northford
Northland
Nova Scotia
Ohio
Okajima
Pacific Coast
Palo Alto
Pennsylvania
Recil Macon
River City
Rockford
Salida
Spokane
Tom Reilly (San Francisco)
Twilight
Vancouver
Western Penn
White Mountain
Windy City
Winnipeg

COMIC BOOK
PRICE GUIDE
WHILE I REALLY LIKE *READING* THE COMIC BOOKS IN MY COLLECTION, THERE'S A LOT OF FUN IN ACTUALLY PUTTING A COLLECTION TOGETHER!

ACTION COMICS
GREEN LANTERN
AMAZING FANTASY
SPIDER-MAN
Detective COMICS
"WHILE WE ALL MIGHT NOT HAVE THE MONEY TO PICK-UP CGC-CERTIFIED 8.0 COPIES OF *ACTION COMICS #1* OR *DETECTIVE COMICS #27*, IT'S A GREAT IDEA TO KEEP TRACK OF WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE MARKET."
"WHEN YOU KEEP UP WITH *RECORD PRICES*, WHAT'S *SELLING*, WHAT'S *NOT* SELLING, AND WHAT'S SUDDENLY *IN DEMAND*, IT HELPS YOU KNOW WHAT YOU SHOULD BE WILLING TO PAY OR WHEN TO SELL."
WOLVERINE
TRANS FORMERS
comico
Primer

BUYING AND *SELLING BACK ISSUES* CAN BE ONE OF THE MOST INTIMIDATING PARTS OF COLLECTING COMIC BOOKS, BUT IF YOU'RE PREPARED IT'S NOT REALLY SCARY AT ALL.
ON THE NEXT PAGE, WE'LL TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE BASICS. BUT REMEMBER, THERE'S *NO SUBSTITUTE FOR EXPERIENCE!*

BUYING AND SELLING

With record prices paid for *Action Comics* #1, *Detective Comics* #27, *Amazing Fantasy* #15, *Incredible Hulk* #1, and many other comics, it's a very interesting time to sell your comics. "Interesting," though, doesn't automatically mean "great."

It seems pretty basic, but you should only patronize dealers who treat you well. Whether you're purchasing a single new issue or setting a record price for a "Holy Grail" back issue, any customer deserves to be treated with respect, as do the dealers with whom you do business.

When it comes to spending serious amounts of money on a comic, you should never deal with a buyer without fully checking their references. The more serious the money, the more patient you should be in getting additional verification, such as checking with The Better Business Bureau. While it is not in and of itself any kind of guaranty, advertisers and advisors in *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* are more likely to have an established reputation.

If you are looking to sell, potential buyers who are dealers will be most concerned with the retail value of your entire collection. Based on demand at that time, which in turn depends on the dealer's customer base, some issues may sell for prices above *Guide*, while others retail below *Guide* prices. More recent issues may only be worth a percentage of cover price. Take into account how the collection breaks down into fast-, moderate-, and slow-moving issues. To expect someone to pay full retail for comics that usually sell at considerably lower prices is unrealistic.

Regardless, you should learn as much as you can about the market so that you can formulate an informed opinion as to what percentage of *Guide* price is acceptable to you. It's also simply good business to get competing offers.

Some buyers may want to purchase only certain key or high grade issues from your collection. While you may be paid a high percentage of retail for their selections, you will find that "cherry-picked" collections are much more difficult to sell, since all of the most desired books will be sold by the time the second or third potential buyer examines your collection.

Auction houses offer another outlet for your comics. For the rarest, high-grade, vintage comics, some auction companies will even offer you cash advances against the expected sales of your comics. Most of the established auction houses will gladly discuss their track records and how they perceive current market conditions.

Another venue, of course, is eBay, which bypasses the auction house structure. It is not exclusively the domain of bargain hunters, but many eBay shoppers expect a discount on the price they would pay dealers or fellow collectors in person.

If you are listing your comics for a prospective buyer, an auction house, an eBay listing or even your insurance company, don't forget how important it is to understand the condition of your comics. Learning how to grade with the top graders in the business can take years, but getting a good understanding of the process doesn't take that long at all.

You should think along the same lines when you are going to purchase collectible comics. Learn what the give and take in the market is about, and develop your understanding of how important grades are to pricing.

Most of us can't afford to go out and buy a 9.6 copy of *Amazing Fantasy* #15 on a whim, but low grade copies are still easily within reach of many collectors.

Whether buying or selling, the key is to get informed.

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COMIC BOOK CONVENTIONS

Comic book conventions are a great way to meet fellow fans, creators, publishers, dealers and others who share your passion for your favorite titles, characters and events. Conventions range from small, one-day events on the local level all the way up to Comic-Con International: San Diego and the New York Comic-Con, the two biggest comic book events in North America.

Below is a list of just some of the shows on the con circuit, but be sure to check your area regularly. You never know when a comic con might pop up!

MegaCon
February 25 – 27, 2011
Orange County Convention Center, Center Hall D,
9899 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819
www.megaconvention.com

Toronto Comic-Con
Direct Energy Centre, Exhibition Place
100 Princes' Blvd, Toronto, ON, M6K 3C3
Canada
www.wizardworld.com

WonderCon
Moscone Center South,
747 Howard Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
www.comic-con.org

Anaheim Comic Con
Anaheim Convention Center
800 West Katella Avenue
Anaheim, CA 92802
www.wizardworld.com

Chicago Comic and Entertainment Expo (C2E2)
McCormick Place
2301 S. Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL 60616
www.C2E2.com

Pittsburgh Comicon
Monroeville Convention Center
209 Mall Boulevard
Monroeville, PA 15146
www.Pittsburghcomicon.com

HeroesCon
June 4-6, 2010
Charlotte Convention Center
501 S. College Street
Charlotte, NC 28202
www.heroesonline.com

Wizard World Philadelphia
June 11-13, 2010
Pennsylvania Convention Center
1101 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
www.wizardworld.com

Comic-Con International: San Diego
July 22-25, 2010
(Preview Night July 21)
San Diego Convention Center
111 W. Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA 92102
www.comic-con.org

Chicago Comic-Con
August 19-22, 2010
Donald E. Stephens Convention Center
5555 N. River Road
Rosemont, IL 60018
www.wizardworld.com

Canadian National Fan Expo
August 27-29, 2010
Metro Toronto Convention Centre
South Building
222 Bremner Blvd.
Toronto, Ontario M5V 3L9
www.hobbystar.com

Baltimore Comic-Con
August 28-29, 2010
Baltimore Convention Center
One West Pratt Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
www.comicon.com/baltimore

Small Press Expo (SPX)
September 10-11, 2010
Bethesda North Marriott Hotel
& Conference Center
5701 Marinelli Road,
N. Bethesda, MD 20852
www.spxpo.com

Big Apple Comic-Con
October 7-10, 2010
Pier 94, 711 12th Avenue (at 55th Street)
New York, NY 10019
www.wizardworld.com

New York Comic Con
October 8-10, 2010
Jacob K. Javits Center
11th Avenue (between 34th and 39th Streets)
New York, NY 10001
www.NewYorkComicCon.com

New Jersey Comic-Con
October 15-17, 2010
New Jersey Convention and
Exposition Center
97 Sunfield Avenue
Edison, NJ 08837
www.wizardworld.com

Alternative Press Expo (APE)
October 16-17, 2010
The Concourse
620 7th Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
www.comic-con.org

Long Beach Comic Con
October 29-31, 2010
Long Beach Convention Center
300 East Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, California 90802
www.LongBeachComicCon.com

Mid-Ohio Con
November 6-7, 2010
Greater Columbus Convention Center
Exhibit Hall E
400 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
www.midohiocon.blogspot.com/

Austin Comic Con
November 12-14, 2010
Austin Convention Center
500 East Cesar Chavez Street
Austin, Texas 78701
www.wizardworld.com

Virginia Comicon
November 21-22, 2010
Sheraton Richmond West
6624 West Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23230
www.vacomicon.com

REVIVED, RENEWED AND REMADE:

The Great Heroes Always Come Back

They've been bringing back superhero characters for a long time. In the 1950s, when superhero comics had just about entirely died out, DC Comics used *Showcase* #4 to present a new version of the Golden Age character The Flash. Just a few years later in *The Avengers* #4, Stan Lee and Jack Kirby revived Captain America.

"As a long time comics fan, I'm reasonably knowledgeable about comics characters going back to the beginning," said Mike Richardson, Publisher of Dark Horse Comics. "It seemed a shame to me that so many great characters, as well as artists and writers, are being forgotten. I thought that a program of deluxe dust jacketed hardcovers would introduce the creators and content to new generations of readers while preserving the work into the near future."

Publishers have found fans receptive to archival editions collecting Golden Age and Silver Age material. From reprinting older material it's not a big step to reviving characters for new adventures.

Marvel brought back *The Agents of Atlas*, a group of characters that had never been a team but that had been published individually by Atlas, as Marvel was known in the 1950s. DC Comics has recently revived both Archie Comics' Red Circle line of superheroes and Milestone Media's universe of characters. Dynamite Entertainment revitalized Red Sonja, the Lone Ranger, Zorro, Buck Rogers, and scores of Golden Age superheroes. Others have gotten into the game as well.

It's not always as easy, though, as simply just deciding to bring a character back. There's often a fine line to walk between slavish devotion to the original concept and remaking the character to the point it's not recognizable.

"If I just change everything, that's not really fair. In fact, it begs the question — why not just create a new character if you're not going to respect the past? That's the first issue," said Jim Krueger, who has written the main *Project Superpowers* title and some of its spin-offs for Dynamite "The second though, especially if the character has fallen into obscurity, how to make that character relevant. How to change the character without betraying who they are or what they were to move them into a position of people being excited by what they've become. In that case, the his-

tory becomes the backstory to be discovered as the story progresses."

"The main challenge is that many of these characters weren't built to last a long time, they were introduced as a fad, or an adjunct to a more popular character. I think the key is not so much being slavish to the historic details of the character's appearance, as feeling intuitive to the character based on the time and everything that came before.

Because honestly, most of these short stories that introduced characters like Gorilla-Man were conceived and executed in less than a week. You've got to look at it as if: What if the writers and artists had really had the time they needed to work with?" said Jeff Parker, the writer behind Marvel's *Agents of Atlas*.

"Compared to say, Spider-Man, they're all pretty lesser known, and thus leave a lot of freedom to work around. I'd say it's pretty even with that cast. The key is: not many people have strong attachments to them as youths, therefore there's not a lot of complaining that you're not getting their character right. Everyone seems to enjoy how we use the cast to embrace pulp history," he said.

Dark Horse, for its part, will offer new interpretations of *Magnus Robot Fighter*, *Doctor Solar, Man of the Atom*, *Turok, Son of Stone*, *The Mighty Samson*, and *Doctor Spektor*, all titles originally published by Dell and Gold Key. The first three, of course, were most recently revived in the early 1990s by Valiant under Editor-in-Chief Jim Shooter, who will also handle the renewal for Dark Horse.

Shooter said that he is honoring the core concepts and trying to enrich, deepen and develop them. He said he thought the characters and their worlds through and tried to distill their essences. He kept what was vital and unique to them.

"More peripheral things are fair game to tinker with. By that I mean you don't have to change those things, but you can if it helps," he said. "Magnus is a man who fights robots with his bare hands, the defender of humanity in a beautiful but flawed future. Solar is godlike power uniquely combined with intellect and knowledge of the fundamental nature of the universe; a product of, and our only defense against science run amok. Turok is an ordinary man, a Pre-Columbian Native American, thrust into the most extreme and extraordinary situation conceivable, who rises to meet the challenge. I think any creative person — and we're *all* creative — who says or thinks those words immediately conjures mental images and starts playing 'What if...?'" Shooter said.

"It's interesting to note that shortly after starting Dark Horse, I went after these same characters, but it turned out Jim Shooter had beat me to them. Now Jim is here at Dark Horse working on the same books. The response has been exciting. People seem to really be looking forward to the upcoming series," Richardson said.

Their revival starts in earnest with Dark Horse's Free Comic Book Day offering of *Doctor Solar/Magnus Robot Fighter*, set to be released on May 1, 2010.

"The books will roll out one at a time, giving each title a chance to hold the spotlight," he said of the Gold Key titles announced to date. "There are more revivals coming, but you'll have to wait to find out who they are. Right now we want to focus attention on these characters."

SECRET ORIGINS:

PART 3: WHY DO YOU COLLECT?

Just as there are many different ways to collect, there are many different reasons for collecting. Some of them are intellectual, but many are just gut-level impulses, something that compels to first pick up one issue and then keep them coming.

We asked a selection of our fellow fans, including collectors, historians, creators and even publishers why they collect, and here's what they had to say…

"Part of the joy of collecting is the hunt — although I long ago "finished" my core set of DC and Marvel titles, continuing to collect has kept me connected to why I love comics. I add a small series to hunt whenever I finish the last, giving me the excuse to troll the longboxes and dealers, and even learn how to hunt on the web.

"Right now it's the handful of Mlle. Marie stories that ran in *Star Spangled War Stories*, which are scarce but beautifully done. Don't give up the hunt!"
- **Paul Levitz**, writer, *Adventure Comics*, former President & Publisher of DC Comics

"I had two older brothers, Sal and Jerry, who had their comic collection in the basement of our home. I remember racing down to the basement as a little boy and being greeted by that old musty comic smell and diving into the comics! I don't even think I could read yet but I loved the art, cool costumes and the fight scenes."
- **Vincent Zurzolo, Jr.**, Chief Operating Officer, Metropolis Collectibles

"That comic was everything to me. At least it was for a week or so. And then it wasn't enough. I needed more. And thus was my weekly habit born right then and there."
- **Chris Ryall**, Publisher & Editor-in-Chief, IDW Publishing

"I imagine the thrill of discovery, love of adventure stories, and anxiety about "to be continued!" were all hard-wired into my DNA at that time. To this day I'm still fascinated by our four-color gems, and can't wait to see what happens next month! "
- ***Andrew "Captain Comics" Smith***, *Contributing Editor, Comics Buyer's Guide.*

"The best experience in collecting is meeting and getting to personally know many of the people who are involved. The most important part of collecting is the history, memories, and relationships that go along with this great hobby."
-**Tom Gordon III**, President, comicspriceguide.com

"It all started with baseball cards in 1988 during junior high school. I bought and traded baseball cards with friends and read just about every guide I could find about sports cards. A couple of years later, the sports card shops that I frequented started selling comic books. Soon I was reading as much as I could about comic books and collecting those, too."
- **Greg Holland**, www.ValiantFans.com

"For whatever reason, I imagine collectors as these cunning guys, far smarter than me, stealthily seeking out and acquiring treasures for a pittance – then flipping said item for big bucks. I see myself as the opposite. I operate on impulse, with zero business sense and no plan. It's my understanding that the smart collector consolidates his acquisitions into, um, collections that benefit from their common characteristics. Complete runs of cool comics. Stuff like that… Actually, I know that is a crock. Because most of my friends that are collectors operate pretty much like me: we buy what we like because it makes us feel good to own certain things. Inspired, even."
- **Robert Tinnell**, writer/director, *Frankenstein and Me*

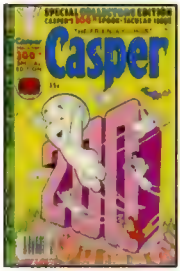
"By high school, I tired of filling holes in blue albums and traded the totally known world of coins for the new world I discovered of totally undocumented presidential campaign buttons. A few years hence, post-college, my fate became obvious. The best way to optimize my choices for personal collecting and to document our undocumented material popular culture was to found Hake's Americana & Collectibles as a resource for all who enjoy collecting the artifacts of their own memories and our history as a nation."
- **Ted Hake**, founder, Hake's Americana & Collectibles

"The gene of collecting has been passed down to me from my grandparents. As a kid, both my grandfathers tried to influence me to collect with them, one stamps and the other coins. When I was eight, my dad took me to a flea market with a comic book dealer. It blew my mind at the time, how neat was it to have all these comics in one place and not like the brief selection at the grocery store. I picked up three comic books and was hooked."
- **Lawrence Klein**, founder and Chairman Emeritus, Museum of Comic and Cartoon Art

"As a comic book historian, I love researching comics and sharing that information with audiences of all ages. It never gets old. Because let's face it, no matter what, when you are reading a comic, you are a kid (again), in heart if not in reality. And even when a comic costs more and the subject matter is more complex, the feeling stays the same."
- **Professor William H. Foster III**, educator and comics historian

"I collect comic books because I still get as much excitement from them now as I did when I bought my first comic back in 1967. And I still have every comic I ever bought off the stands. Unfortunately, they aren't in great condition; they were very well read."
- **Dan Braun**, filmmaker, writer and Contributing Editor of *Creepy*

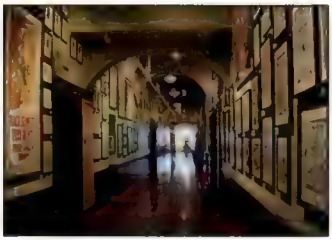
"It was the fall of 1978. Harvey's *Casper* had just recently released its 200th issue and they sure didn't want you to miss it. The cover featured all the characters flying around an enormous '200' at the top of a mountain, a blurb proudly proclaimed this was a 'Casper Collectors 200th Special Edition,' and if that didn't catch your eye there was still more text above the main title trumpeting the fact that this was a Special COLLECTORS Edition, Casper's 200th Spook-Tacular Issue.' Clearly this was serious business."
- **Dr. Arnold T. Blumberg**, Curator, Geppi's Entertainment Museum



If you'd like to share the reason you collect, drop us a line at feedback@gemstonepub.com with "ORIGIN ISSUE" in the subject line. We'd love to hear your story!

SECRET ORIGINS:

PART 4: POP CULTURE HERITAGE



On Wednesday, September 6, 2006, Geppi's Entertainment Museum (GEM) hosted a black tie-optional grand opening gala for the Baltimore and greater Maryland community including business, social and political leaders from around the region. Maryland's governor at the time, Robert L. Ehrlich, State Superintendent of Schools Dr. Nancy Grasmick, and numerous other dignitaries represented the state at GEM's historic Camden Station building.

The following night, Thursday, September 7, 2006, the activity was repeated with a second event for the comic book industry with DC Comics' Paul Levitz, Dark Horse Comics' Mike Richardson, legendary cartoonist Jerry Robinson (creator of The Joker), equally legendary fantasy artist Frank Frazetta, and numerous others among the guests.

Attendees were able to view the origins of pop culture dating back to the birth of our nation, and see how it's influenced our way of life. With wide-eyes and smiling faces, guests who have experienced GEM thus far have been absorbed the imagery of the exhibits and seemed to magically be transported back of their youth. Phrases like "I used to have that" and "I remember those" filled the air along with an excitement that was almost electric.

"The 17,000-square-foot space takes up the second and third floors of the former Camden train station here, whose main floor is home to the Sports Legends at Camden Yards museum. Geppi's Entertainment Museum celebrates the colorful characters and collectibles that have emerged from comic strips and comic books since the late 1800s. Its packed displays - of movie posters, animation cels, action figures, board games, advertisements and more - chronicle the evolution of these characters, often reflecting the periods of American history from which they emerged," the *New York Times* said.

"As you wander through the lobby wondering all along how much more impressive the rest of the exhibit could be, you receive your answer immediately on crossing the threshold into the museum's main hallway. The walls are easily 20 feet tall and are covered from top to bottom (well, about 3-4 feet from the floor) with posters, original artwork, cartoon cels, cereal boxes and virtually anything else you could imagine that has some sort of pop culture icon emblazoned on it. Far from being overwhelmingly busy, with seemingly disparate images that you might assume would be at odds with each other fighting for your attention instead coming together to form a tapestry telling the story of American culture," Comic Book Resources said.

"To tour the new Geppi's Entertainment Museum in Camden Station is to reunite with those legions of imaginary characters who have instructed generations of Americans from infancy to old age," said the *Baltimore Sun*.

GEM is located at 301 W. Camden Street, Baltimore, MD 21201, immediately next door to Oriole Park at Camden Yards and across the street from the Baltimore Convention Center.

For more information call (410) 625-7060 or visit www.geppismuseum.com.

pop culture with character

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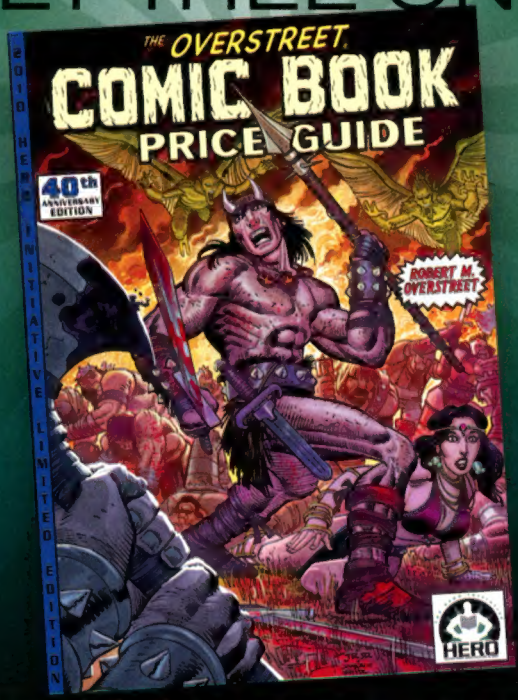

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Overstreet Hall of Fame

The Overstreet Hall of Fame was conceived to single out individuals who have made great contributions to the comic book arts. This includes writers, artists, editors, publishers and others who have plied their craft in insightful and meaningful ways.

While such evaluations are inherently subjective, they also serve to aid in reflecting upon those who shaped the experience of reading comic books over the years. Below is a list of the previous inductees:

Class of 2006

Murphy Anderson
Jim Aparo
Jim Lee
Mac Raboy

Class of 2007

Dave Cockrum
Steve Ditko
Bruce Hamilton
Martin Nodell
George Pérez
Jim Shooter
Dave Stevens
Alex Toth
Michael Turner

Class of 2008

Carl Barks
Will Eisner
Al Feldstein
Harvey Kurtzman
Stan Lee
Marshall Rogers
John Romita, Sr.
John Romita, Jr.
Julius Schwartz
Mike Wieringo

Class of 2009

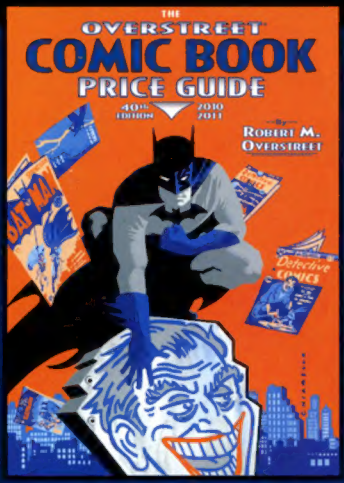
Neal Adams
Matt Baker
Chris Claremont
Palmer Cox
Bill Everett
Frank Frazetta
Neil Gaiman
William M. Gaines
Carmine Infantino
Jack Kirby
Joe Kubert
Paul Levitz
Russ Manning
Todd McFarlane
Don Rosa
John Severin
Joe Simon
Al Williamson

In 2010, who will get in?

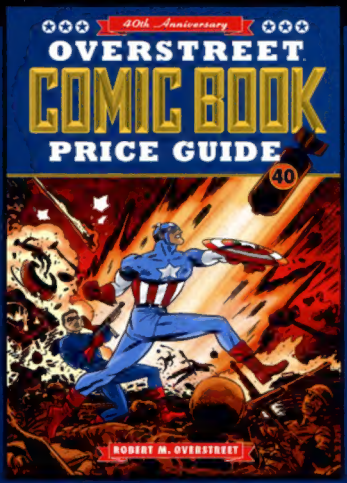
Check out *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* #40
On sale July 21, 2010

OVERSTREET TURNS 40!

Since 1970, The *Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* has been the Bible of collectors and helped define the back issue market.
This year, the *Guide* celebrates its 40th anniversary with two fantastic covers!



BATMAN
By Mark Chiarello



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